

Cinco de Mayo Excerpt, P.2

It was late in the afternoon when General Zaragoza probably thought God was on his side. The sky was growing darker by the minute. Every day for the past week or so there had been a thunderstorm at about this time, and the one that was approaching appeared to be much larger than its predecessors. He ordered his units to let the storm do its work. If there were any Frenchmen still standing when it was over, they would be easier to deal with.

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General Lorencez apparently did not have his eyes on the sky. He sent the French cavalry charging up the north slope of Guadalupe Hill just before the cloud-burst arrived. They were met with drenching rain, thunder and lightning, hailstones and severe winds that swayed large tree branches all around them. Lost soldiers were crawling and staggering around in the blinding downpour. Horses were slipping and sliding everywhere in the mud, falling over and injuring themselves and their riders.

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Zaragoza had guessed correctly: Lorencez didn't have a clue about military strategy. He had just flung his foot soldiers heedlessly up a hill against fortified positions and a well-placed artillery, deluded in his belief that no one could defeat his world-famous army.

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